R E P O R T R E S U M E S

ED 020 072 RC 002 532

PURPOSEFUL RECREATION FOR PERSONAL GROWTH IN RURAL AREAS, THE EDUCATION-EXTENSION ROLE.

BY- NIEDERFRANK, E.J.
AMERICAN COUNTRY LIFE ASSN., WASHINGTON, D.C.

PUB DATE 8 JUL 64

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.25 HC-$0.36 7P.

DESCRIPTORS- COMMUNITY ATTITUDES, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, *EXTENSION EDUCATION, *FARM OCCUPATIONS, *INCOME, PLANNING, *RECREATION, RECREATIONAL FACILITIES, RURAL AREAS, *RURAL DEVELOPMENT, RURAL ECONOMICS, EXTENSION SERVICE, USDA

USE OF PRIVATE LAND IN RURAL AREAS FOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES WOULD PROVIDE A NEW SOURCE OF INCOME TO THE RURAL POPULATION WHILE MEETING INCREASING RECREATIONAL NEEDS. IT IS THE ROLE OF THE EXTENSION SERVICE AT THE STATE AND LOCAL LEVELS TO EDUCATE THE RURAL POPULATION IN UTILIZATION OF RECREATIONAL RESOURCES. IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS IN RECREATION RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT ARE ATTITUDES OF THE RURAL FAMILY AND NEARBY COMMUNITIES, MANAGEMENT CAPABILITIES OF THE POTENTIAL FACILITY OPERATOR, AND ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY OF THE OPERATION. EDUCATION IN THIS AREA MUST INCLUDE MOTIVATION, EXPLANATION, ORGANIZATION, PLANNING, AND EVALUATION. INVOLVEMENT OF OTHER STATE AND LOCAL RESOURCES AND AGENCIES IS VALUABLE IN ACHIEVING SOUND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT. THIS SPEECH WAS DELIVERED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN COUNTRY LIFE ASSOCIATION (WASHINGTON, D.C., JULY 7-8, 1964). (JEH)

OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

ED 020072

PURPOSEFUL RECREATION FOR PERSONAL GROWTH IN RURAL AREAS

Panel: Recreation and Government Agencies

The Education-Extension Role

I am briefly discussing our subject today under several headings: First, extension and its general role; secondly, some basic factors about recreation development that add to the uniqueness of the education function, and thirdly some specifics about the extension role. Finally I want to briefly touch on the challenge of total recreation development.

Much of what I say will relate to the total education function; part may relate more specifically to the Extension Service as an agency. The education function is the foundation stone of recreation development in rural areas, just as it is of any and all programs, ideas, or areas of emphasis. Extension's role is primarily to give leadership to this education function, as distinguished from land use technology, the credit function and other aspects which fall within the roles of various other agencies than Extension.

Extension and its general role

I am sure that each of you are already thoroughly familiar with the general purposes and modus operandi of Cooperative Extension Work as established under the Smith-Lever Act of 1914. It is characterized by 3 main ideas, all of which have relevance to our role in advancing the current USDA emphasis on outdoor recreation resource development among private land-owners:

1. Extension work is strictly educational; we are not responsible for administering as such any particular name programs of the government. But our educational role includes serving as an educational resource of the department, facilitating the dissemination of education information made available by the department research and action programs as needed and wanted by the people.

2. Extension work is cooperative, being both financed and administered cooperatively by the federal, State and county governments. Each level shares in the financing and each level has a role of leadership in program development, in which the details or specific operations of extension education at the local level are determined and conducted by the local people and local extension staff members working together. Furthermore, its relation to the States is through the State land-grant colleges. Thus, it is an educational arm of the State land-grant university, as well as of the USDA.

   This cooperative nature coupled with the involvement of local people is a unique feature of extension education which somewhat distinguishes it from other federal government agencies. Strictly speaking, Extension

RC 002532

By E. J. Niederfrank, Rural Sociologist, Federal Extension Service, USDA, before the 43rd. Annual Meeting of the American Country Life Association, Washington, D. C., July 7-8, 1964.

as it operates locally is not a federal agency; it is a State and local agency which receives some assistance from the federal government.

Now from the standpoint of developing recreation enterprises on farms for income, these two points mean that extension is primarily concerned with helping the people know about and utilize recreation resources as a means of improving their income and living situations. Its basic function is not to sell a program as such, but to help the people make adjustments to improve their income and living; and outdoor recreation enterprises represent a new or additional tool for this and for providing recreation opportunities to all the people.

As a matter of fact, I believe that my fellow panel members will agree, that development of outdoor recreation enterprises on farms is really not a "Program" in capital letters as such, but is an idea -- an idea that will be worthy of emphasis for years to come.

3. Cooperative Extension education is limited in scope but rapidly becoming broader. As you know, through the years extension work has centered mainly around agricultural production and resource development technology, agricultural economics, home economics technology, and youth development in the form of 4-H and related programs. But in recent years more and more emphasis has been placed upon human resource development -- individual, family and community development -- which has necessitated becoming concerned with a broader and broader spectrum of problems faced by rural people. This trend also has required the development of cooperation with general extension and other parts of the university, as well as with other public and private agencies not usually involved in previous years.

Even extension education in agricultural production and economics is broader than ever before; and it is also getting deeper as programs are forced to go more intensely into scientific technology in order to adequately deal with the growing complexity of agricultural and other problems faced by the people.

This growth in breadth and depth of program includes greater concern for recreation, both producer recreation as a source of income and consumer recreation as a part of human development. We need to be concerned with the latter -- adequate recreation opportunities for rural people -- farm and town -- as consumers of recreation, along with our concern for recreation as another source of income for rural people.

The two concerns are compatible, but it took recreation as a source of income to get extension and other agencies more interested in recreation generally. Before this, recreation was not looked upon with much favor by farm people and agricultural agencies, although advanced programs in it were underway in a few States -- had been for years.

But today recreation has become a widely accepted concept. Part of this is due to the new emphasis given it as a source of income, and part is due to the increased interest in recreation as a human need brought about by the trends of the times; therefore the need for increased recreation facilities and opportunities for the people to enjoy.

Some factors to consider in recreation resource development

First, let us mention the whole area of attitudes -- attitudes of the farm or ranch family toward recreation itself and toward being around and serving lots of people. The trend toward greater interest in recreation mentioned above is significant, because it brings out a basic point which the professional worker must ever keep in mind as he works on extension resource development; this is that people, both staff and operators of recreation enterprises, must believe in recreation themselves if they expect to be successful in trying to furnish it to others.

They must understand the value of recreation as a part of human development; therefore, appreciate what it means to the consumers being served. They must also believe in or like the particular kinds of recreation enterprises being planned. In other words, a person who dislikes camping or hunting birds with dogs, or who would dislike being around a miscellaneous playground with lots of people, probably would not make a very successful manager of such enterprises on his own farm. Many farm people prefer the isolation and independence of farming, and simply could not adjust to serving the public; in fact, that's why they like farming. On the other hand some would enjoy having lots of people around and be very much interested in serving them to greatest satisfaction. If so, the recreation business may be for them.

As time goes on, undoubtedly more and more training about attitudes and other human factors will be given to staff and to landowners, for it is essential to sound decision making about recreation development. Agency staff members must become more interested in the Why of recreation and what it requires in terms of human understanding and talent, as they work on the technology of recreation development. Otherwise, there is the danger of leading people into recreation who don't belong in it or into particular enterprises which they shouldn't attempt to engage in.

Secondly, there are other personal human factors to consider, such as the family situation, managerial ability, and operational or programming knack. Some families may have an ideal situation for a camp ground or a vacation farm business as far as physical resources and economic feasibility are concerned; but because of age, health, wife unable to do the cooking and housekeeping required, no family labor or too many small children, it simply might be too risky for them to go into such a business at this time.

Some also have a knack for providing activities with recreation purposes in mind and their imagination will add many attractive possibilities for people to obtain recreation satisfactions, while others may not have any such knack at all. For examples, having campfire kindling wood handy and helping people build fires, marking out little nature trails into the

woods, having name tags for trees and shrubs, lists of interesting places in the area to visit, suggestions for where to eat out, opportunity for the children to see the farm animals or to sit on the tractor, a few playground items for the little tots; one might even have a neighborhood group come in nightly to lead campfire singing.

Managment ranges all the way from keeping records, looking after the insurances and legal regulations, supervising employees, policing to protect customers and providing other safeties, to trash collection and deciding on the hours for swimming, boating or fishing. Probably the simplest farm recreation enterprise to operate would be fishing in the farm pond, but even here certain attitudes and knowledges and abilities are necessary, if the business is to be successful.

Thus, management is a major consideration. For Extension as well as other agencies are and must be concerned with the success of the operator. We must want to encourage success where feasible, and also to prevent mistakes where success is in doubt.

Third, is the community factor; this is important, too. Research indicates that many tourist vacationers like to stay several days in a place if there is enough to stay for, and that 70 percent of their expenditures are for food, lodging, and transportation or automobile expenses. They like most to go sightseeing, to take pictures, and to browse in native craft and gift shops.

The quality of all of these services will be the main thing that adds or subtracts from the recreation enjoyment of the tourist consumer. Other recreation enterprises, too, such as bird hunting, shooting preserve, lake and camp ground facility, a vacation farm enterprise, or a fishing place will also have comparable expenditures and user interests; therefore need for quality treatment.

I mention all of this to emphasize the relationship of community to sound recreation resource development. For here is where the townspeople also affect the success of commercial recreation development -- their attitudes and the quality of the services they keep, the attractiveness of the town itself. Are the filling stations in your towns attractive and clean, manned by pleasant attendants? Do the restaurants or other eating places have appeal and provide quality service? Do the churches happily welcome Sunday strangers and otherwise serve vacation residents? What is your community's attitude toward tourists or vacationers? What about land use planning and zoning to protect the recreation enterpriser from surrounding land uses that would hurt his business? The growth of recreation as a new local industry is producing around the country a more favorable attitude about planning and zoning on the part of rural people themselves.

And on the other side of the community coin is the fact that recreation resource enterprises on private lands enhances the community income in other ways. It provides additional jobs for a certain number of people; it increases town business at the filling stations and the like; the increased incomes of the farm recreation enterprisers go into the local banks and businesses, too.

Related to the community factor is the need for expanded education in resource conservation. For as our basic outdoor recreation resources become more crowded or limited in proportion to expanding population, and they will, the danger of their misuse will also increase, unless along the way we also provide for the training of the mass recreation public in the appreciation of these resources. For examples, greater love of nature must be instilled, also greater regard for the fences and the animals and the rules of the landowner or recreation entrepreneur, greater regard for other recreation consumers who don't want their recreation deprived by the misbehavior of other people. Outlying rural territory is not freely open for townspeople to roam at will as if it was communal property.

Thus, recreation enterprise development is community business as well as the business of individual operators. Community leadership must give rise to needed community education pertinent to local recreation development.

Probably the most important factor of all is <u>economic feasibility</u>. This calls for thorough analysis of many elements, ranging all the way from the quality of the potential operator's own lands and woods and waters to costs of development and operation, population base, accessibility, and estimated income, to the plans of public recreation agencies in the area and to other opportunities of the family for more income than from a recreation business.

Over-riding all this is the whole matter of land use adjustment. Tremendous changes are taking place -- shifts in population settlement, new industries, motels, and other service establishments on formerly farm lands, new highways, expanding suburbanization, new outdoor recreation and education facilities. In some places, commercial farm people are tending to move to the towns to live and rural areas are filling up with new nonfarm families. Hundreds of new population clusters and communities are forming annually while in other places towns are declining and rural lands idling. Many of the people to be involved today in programs about land resources are absentee landowners, or owners who have a different interest in the land than the traditional farm and town people which you and I know.

Thus, recreation enterprises, soil conservation education, taxes and zoning are but parts of a total land use adjustment complex that we must more clearly discern and work on in total.

<u>Specifics of Extension Role</u>

The above economic, human and social factors have been mentioned only in brief but I am sure that they indicate to you the scope of the educational job essential to successful farm adjustments relative to recreation enterprise development. Churches, civic groups, farm organizations, and other agencies all may take part in this educational process; it is not necessarily extension's job alone.

This education must involve motivation, explanation, analysis, organization, leadership development, planning, and evaluation. And these in turn call for a variety of teaching materials and teaching activities, including counseling with individual groups and families. (A few samples of printed materials or publications are here on the table.)

Back of all the necessary education of course must be facts, research. More research findings about the economic and human aspects of recreation resource development are increasingly being made available, from both the Economics Research Service of the USDA, other departments of the federal government, and the State experiment stations, as well as from private sources. Extension endeavors to keep informed about findings and to use these in its education and counseling with rural families and organizations.

Still another very important but related aspect is correlation of agency programs and involvement of other resources Statewise and locally as needed. These are resources for planning and action to be brought in as appropriate. Extension endeavors to give leadership to involvement of resources, as a part of endeavoring to achieve as sound program development as possible. A step along this line is the idea of State interagency conferences on recreation resource development. Several States have had such conferences or seminars during the past year. Such meetings provide a wholesome exchange of views about programs, progress and problems, and also build helpful contacts between resources who can help at given points in planning and action. They also can serve as a springboard for promoting outdoor recreation resource development in the State.

Recreation for living as well as income

Probably a basic concern must be the recreation of rural people themselves -- community recreation. Recreation is a broad field, extending far beyond outdoor farm recreation enterprises and national parks. It ranges all the way from these to local social activities in groups, arts, crafts, home recreation, playground sports and watching television, to picnicing in the local parks or going for a swim in the community pool. The trend has been toward outdoor recreation, and undoubtedly this trend will continue. Yet research indicates that its the simple recreational pleasures that the great masses of people need and want -- things to do nearby within an easy distance back and forth from home for a short camping excursion, a day's outing, a hike, a swim, or just restful leisure.

People engage in recreation to meet basic human needs -- relaxation, relief from tension, social exchange or fellowship, physical fitness, fellowship and group unity, personal development, creativity, new experiences and knowledge, constructive use of leisure time.

Thus, recreation enterprises as a source of income is one thing; its part of the recreation picture. While a much larger matter is providing recreation opportunities for the masses who will be needing and wanting it more than ever before, both in declining communities and in expanding ones.

We must have greater concern for this community recreation planning and development, and on an area basis sizable enough to be effective. This calls for community organization and for recreation technology, both of which in turn call for leadership and education.

Developing recreation opportunities for young people and for senior citizens, improving recreation programs and recreation education in 4-H, in churches, in schools, and in other organizations, are a part of this overall community recreation development which is needed today more thant ever before.

Cooperative agricultural extension has done much along this line through the years in 5 or 6 States, and 10 or 15 others have been doing more in recent years. But by and large community recreation development has been a neglected field in rural life, except as the county and municipal recreation movement has expanded and other organization programs have developed based on leadership and assistance from other sources.

Even in recent years it seems to me that I have seen in Extension and other public agencies a flagging of concern about recreation as a human factor, right at the time when we should be having more concern than ever before on the part of the educational public servant. Unfortunately the term still seems to have some stigma. There is little concern about the WHY of recreation, its values, and the technology of recreation programming. We desperately need stepped up educational work along this line, if our emphases on developing recreation facilities is to be successful or accomplish the ultimate objective, which is all the people having all the recreation they need and want for health and satisfaction.

However, on the other hand, there are other signs that recreation is becoming more and more recognized as a human development need -- even as a public service more or less commensurate with health and education, and that concern for programming activities and education relating to it is on the increase. The total extension services of the universities, rather than cooperative extension in agriculture and home economics as we have known it, undoubtedly will become more and more involved in this trend and other community social development during the years ahead.

So, to sum up, we must be people-minded as we work on recreation resource development -- mindful of the recreation needs and wants of the people in the community, mindful of the economic and human factors pertinent to deciding whether or not to enter a recreation business and in operating it, mindful of the values or satisfactions of recreation to the consumer. We must understand and wholeheartedly believe in recreation; appreciate the point of view of both the recreation consumer and the recreation enterpriser, and help each other understand and serve the other.

For as the farmer turns to the public for income, he also must prepare to best serve them well, and at a profit to himself.

All of this will take increasing educational effort in the years ahead.